

[FE-27-98](#) (document link)

SUMMARY FOR FE-27-98:
SELECTED AND POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

SELECTED FACTORS

Railroad: Willamette & Pacific Railroad, Inc.

Location: Monmouth, Oregon

Region: Region 8

Month: October

Date: 10/13/98

Time: 9:40 a.m., PST

Data for Fatally Injured Employee(s)

Carman

35 years old

45 days of service

Last rules training: August 1998

Last safety training: August 1998

Last physical: Not available

Data for All Employees (Craft, Positions, Activity)

Craft: MOE

Positions:

Carman

Foreman

Chief Mechanical Officer

Activity: The Carman was traveling (in his own pickup truck) from one job site in Independence, Oregon, 28 miles to his normal duty station, McMinnville, Oregon, for the rest of his assignments.

SUMMARY FOR FE-27-98 CONTINUED

POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

EVENT

En route to his normal duty station, a Carman was fatally injured in a highway vehicle collision.

PCF No. 1

The incident occurred when the Carman's pickup truck collided with the passenger side of another vehicle at an intersection two miles north of Monmouth, Oregon. He died at the scene about 10 minutes later. The Carman failed to obey the traffic control devices (STOP sign and flashing red lights) at the intersection. The other driver had the right-of-way.

REPORT: FE-27-98

RAILROAD: Willamette & Pacific Railroad, Inc. (WPRR)

LOCATION: Monmouth, Oregon

DATE & TIME: Oct. 13, 1998, 9:40 a.m., PST

PROBABLE CAUSE: The Carman was fatally injured in an automobile accident when he failed to obey traffic control devices (STOP sign and flashing red lights).

EMPLOYEE:

Occupation:	Carman
Age:	35 Years
Length of Service:	45 Days
Last Rules Training:	Aug. 28, 1998
Last Safety Training:	Aug. 28, 1998
Last Physical Exam:	Not Available

CIRCUMSTANCES PRIOR TO THE ACCIDENT

On Oct. 13, 1998 at 7:00 a.m., following completion of an off-duty period of 21 hours, the employee went on duty at his residence. The employee, a Carman, was assigned to travel to the Sumotomo Rail welding facility in Independence, Oregon. He drove his private vehicle, a 1978 Chevrolet pickup truck, to the rail plant to inspect some welded rail that the WPRR was purchasing. After completing his inspection of the rail, he called his Foreman at 9:10 a.m. for the next assignments he was to complete at his normal duty station, McMinnville, Oregon, 28 miles northwest of Independence.

After leaving Independence, the Carman traveled west on Hoffman Road for approximately two miles to the intersection of Hoffman Road and State Highway 99W. The intersection of Hoffman Road and State Highway 99W was two miles north of Monmouth, Oregon and was equipped with flashing red signals and STOP signs for traffic traveling west and east on Hoffman Road, and flashing yellow lights for traffic traveling north and south on Highway 99W. Traffic traversing the intersection on Highway 99W was not required to stop and had the right-of-way. At the intersection, visibility of traffic traveling on Highway 99W was unrestricted.

At the time of the accident, it was daylight, the sky was overcast, and the temperature was 55° F.

THE ACCIDENT

At 9:40 a.m., the Carman's vehicle, heading west on Hoffman Road, approached the intersection of Highway 99W. According to a witness interviewed by the Oregon State Police, the Carman failed to obey the traffic control device (STOP sign and flashing red lights) located at the intersection. The Carman's vehicle collided with the passenger side of a vehicle heading north on Highway 99W. Polk County Fire and Rescue responded to the crash scene at 9:48 a.m. Shortly thereafter, a Polk County Deputy Sheriff arrived at the scene. They found the Carman positioned in the driver seat of his vehicle, slumped over and leaning towards the passenger door. Emergency medical technicians tried to resuscitate the employee, without success. At 9:53 a.m., the Carman died at the scene. At 10:27 a.m., members of the Oregon State Police, including one Crash Reconstruction Technician, arrived to assist with the investigation.

At approximately 11:30 a.m., the Carman's body was removed from the scene by mortuary technicians.

POST-ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION

Post-accident toxicological testing was not required under the provisions of 49 CFR Part 219.201. However, a blood alcohol test was performed by the Oregon State Medical Examiner. The results were negative.

According to the Polk County Deputy Sheriff, the Carman had a seat belt on at the time of the accident and was alone in the vehicle. The person (non-railroad employee) operating the other vehicle was taken to the hospital, treated for minor injuries, and released on the day of the accident.

During an interview with the deceased Carman's wife, she stated that "he [the Carman] had had a good night's rest and was fully rested before going on duty the morning of Oct. 13, 1998."

The cause of death was head and abdominal injuries.

The Chief Mechanical Officer for the Willamette Pacific Railroad was contacted and presented with an article from the American Automobile Association. The article stated that lack of attention while driving a highway vehicle contributes to many automobile accidents and that 37 percent of drivers involved in accidents take no evasive action. The Chief Mechanical Officer said he would address this issue at future safety meetings with all his employees.

APPLICABLE RULES

Willamette & Pacific Railroad Safety Rules

General Safety Rule L-3. Operating Highway Vehicles - Drivers of motor vehicles must obey Local, State, and/or Federal motor vehicle codes.

Oregon Vehicle Code

ORS. 811.265(1) (b).- Fails to obey any specific traffic control device described in ORS 811.260 in the manner required by that section.